Author: Saga Sandin Bankovic

Prostitution on 1870s In Malmö

Prostituted women During 1870s IN Malmö

In 1847, a so-called regulation was introduced in Sweden, a way, according to the state, to prevent the spread of venereal diseases through medical examinations. Regulation existed in several different countries and meant that prostitution was controlled through different types of regulation. The regulations worked differently in different countries but focused almost exclusively on women. The women who received the stamp as a publicly promiscuous woman were monitored and registered, she was regulated based on the regulations that existed in the country. The majority of women were not allowed to wear certain clothes, show themselves on named streets and in some cases had a curfew after eleven o'clock. The promiscuous women also had to undergo weekly medical examinations so that the authorities could check that they were not infected with venereal diseases.

Between the years 1870–1880 there was a population increase in Malmö, the population increased by 48.7% and the increase was due, as in other parts of Sweden, to the increasingly widespread urbanization.

Poor people in the countryside moved towards the city to find a better life than those who in the meantime existed on the plains of Skåne. Some who applied to the city managed to scrape together enough money to travel on the emigrant steamer to the increasingly better America. The 1870s in Sweden was a flourishing time for industrial and thus economic life, which Malmö also took part in. The county board pointed out during the first half of the decade that harvests had improved and prices had risen for barn products and livestock. More workers were needed and with that the salary rose but also the cost of living, something which was not considered a problem for the "ordinary worker" in the meantime. The railways and the easy access to water meant that the trade network widened and factories appeared in every nook and cranny. Between Stora Nygatan and Baltzarsgatan was the steaming Bomullsfabriken and on the other side of Nygatan was the Malmö Yllefabrik.

Doctor
Liljekrantz

Examin

Maria Sofia
Svensson

From Malmö

Even a tobacco factory located low in the city, at Västergatan, Kockum's tobacco factory could be located. With the factories, the noise level in the city also increased, however, it was not only the factories that contributed to the noise that spread. The majority of craftsmen who were around the city also contributed to the ever-higher acoustics, carpenters, tinsmiths, blacksmiths and cobblers were some of them. In 1874, Axel Adlercreutz took control of Skåne County, which led to "the more frivolous life", as Bjurling calls it, things got less easy in the city. Adlercreutz who had a strong Christian personality carried out a series of measures and with him the popular but also vulgar "cafés chantantes" were banned. The immoral as Bjurling describes the group of people, thus came to seek other and new places. These types of places were in Malmö located at, among others, Davidshall and Fredriksberg, on the other hand, the gentlemen there had to content themselves with surreptitiously groping the waitresses, says Bjurling. Even a tobacco factory located low in the city, at Västergatan, Kockum's tobacco factory could be located. With the factories, the noise level in the city also increased, however, it was not only the factories that contributed to the noise that spread. The majority of craftsmen who were around the city also contributed to the ever-higher acoustics, carpenters, tinsmiths, blacksmiths and cobblers were some of them.

In 1874, Axel Adlercreutz took control of Skåne County, which led to "the more frivolous life", as Bjurling calls it, things got less easy in the city. Adlercreutz who had a strong Christian personality carried out a series of measures and with him the popular but also vulgar "cafés chantantes" were banned. The immoral as Bjurling describes the group of people, thus came to seek other and new places. These types of places were in Malmö located at, among others, Davidshall and Fredriksberg, on the other hand, the gentlemen there had to content themselves with surreptitiously groping the waitresses, says Bjurling. However, there was a certain group that Adlercreutz could not have much influence on, the prostituted women. With the worsening economic situation, the group of promiscuous women in Malmö became increasingly large, and in 1876 the city doctor had noted that the number of women had increased from 28 to 38.

With the regulations around loose women that were introduced in Sweden in 1847 came these 38 women to be examined by a doctor or examined as Bjurling describes it, 1057 times during the year and every other week. According to the morality police, during that time the corner at Humlegatan and Grönegatan was a den of sin where prostitution often took place.

Regulations around prostitution were established for the first time in France and the regulations were later spread to other countries in Europe under the name "the French system". Laws and regulations around prostitution came into being even before the French Revolution, but during the 19th century it got more and more attention and impact. The system that was established came to consist of rules in the form of municipal regulations and rules for how the women should live. Women who were registered as prostitutes had to undergo regular medical examinations and around France the cities had to decide what kind of regulations to introduce. The system quickly became successful and the French police were in demand, how could such a successful system work and how would they be established in other countries? Several countries in Europe came during the 19th century to introduce similar systems, on the other hand, the Nordic countries were on the fringes of this new thinking as the countries were in an involuntary union, coercive rule and tried to pursue a period of peace. During the 1840s–30s, however, the Nordic countries began to try to establish systems similar to those in France. More sexually transmitted diseases spread and syphilis could in the worst case and circumstances lead to death. . During the end of the 19th century, a doctor named Axel Holst advocated the introduction of regulation of prostitution to reduce the spread of venereal diseases something like received great support. Jansdotter and Svanström describe in their text how exclusively women came to be forcibly examined by doctors with the introduction of regulation of prostitution in the Nordics. Regulation evolved over time and from being a way to control prostitution and keep venereal diseases at bay, it instead became an opportunity for the state to administer prostitution to maintain a kind of morality and order in society. In the Nordics, the regulations were like-minded in all countries, it prescribed what times women could be out, how they should dress and behave and where they could go.

The introduction of rules thus meant a greater bureaucratic process, women who were suspected of prostitution came to be monitored. The surveillance was then recorded and things like medical examinations, arrests, detention in workhouses and prisons came to be written down.
The majority of the women in the study (90 in total) were confirmed between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, and many of them then chose to move on to other cities and work. Those who were born in Malmö usually chose to get a job in the city or in Copenhagen. One of these was Anna Sofia Fredriksson who was born on the twelfth of April 1856 in Malmö. She was confirmed at the age of sixteen and then worked in a factory.
Another of these women was Johanna Persson who was born in 1851 in Maglarp parish. At the age of sixteen, Johanna was confirmed in Trelleborg and then moved to the city of Malmö and worked in a factory. After that, Johanna had no other job, but was seduced at the age of seventeen and then lived a licentious life. Both Anna and Johanna are typical examples of the women who were found in the material for this study, the majority of women worked either as maids or in factories and afterwards or during time, for various reasons they came to live loosely.
The first woman presented in the material for 1878 is Anna Kristina Nyberg. Anna was confirmed at the age of 15 and the same year she was also seduced. She later gave birth at the age of sixteen to a boy who was brought up by her parents. The material does not give us much more information about Anna than this, but it appears that she later chose to enter into marriage and in 1887 she moved to America.

Kjersti Bengtsson who was born in Malmö in 1860 was noted. She was recorded in the criminal police document in 1879 and before that had lived in her parents' home until she was confirmed at the age of fifteen. She then worked for a time in a match factory. Kjersti was seduced at the age of seventeen by three men according to the material, the sailor Jöns Andersson, the trader Petterson and the trader Fritz Ryberg.

The majority of the 90 women surveyed do not originate from the city of Malmö. 39 women in the material were born in Malmö and the remaining 51 women were born either in surrounding cities, current districts of Malmö or from cities in other provinces and areas. These 51 women have, through different life choices, come to move to Malmö and with that have been written off by the criminal police. From the majority of cities, during the investigated period, only one woman moved to the city, and in five other cases, more than one person chose to move to Malmö from the same city or parish. It should be added that current districts of Malmö such as Hyllie, Fosie and Sibbarp are counted in the study as "own areas". It is only the women who are stated in the material as having Malmö as their place of birth that are counted as Malmö.

Around Malmö there are several cities and here we can find several urban areas to surrounding current municipalities. The material mentions, among other things, Vanskiva, which today is a built-up area in Hässleholm municipality, the central town of Lund in Lund municipality, Klagstorp and Lilla Alstad, which are built-up areas in Trelleborg municipality. In the material, as mentioned earlier, there are also the districts of Fosie, Hyllie and Sibbarp to Malmö. Other birthplaces mentioned are also the small towns of Stora Harrie in Kävlinge Municipality, Slimminge in Skurups Municipality and Börringe.

The material testifies that several women actually worked at just one factory in Malmö or Copenhagen at some point during their lives. One of these women in the material is Maria Elisabeth Danielsson, who was born in Landskrona in 1848. She stayed in the parental home until she got a job as a nanny at the age of thirteen, then she was confirmed at the age of 15. After confirmation, she moved to Malmö and worked for a time at a factory in Copenhagen before taking a job at the Cigarrfabriken in Malmö as a factory worker. Another woman is Josefina Andersson who was born in Halmstad in 1854. At the age of nineteen, Josefina was employed at the Bomullsfabriken in Copenhagen, where she worked until she turned twenty-two. She then moved to Malmö.

Prostituted woman in Malmö

Of the 90 women examined for this study, 30 women had a written down nickname. The table below presents the women, their nickname, appearance and place of birth with a conclusion about the origin of the nickname.

Maria Sofia Svensson ”Krull” Malmö

Augusta Maria Larsson ”Klar i särken” Malmö

Anna maria Abrahamsson ”Obertyskan” Maglarp

Mathilda Carolina Stillström ”Öländningen” Böda

Lovisa Ulrika Johansson ”Röda Lovisa” Skallmeja

Anna Smith ”Svarta Anna” Slimminge

Anna Sofia Hansson ”Mormors katt” Malmö

Christina Maria Jönsson ”Knytet” Alseda

Carolina Svensson ”Kurens mormor” Malmö

Augusta Johansson Persson ”Fy för satan” Lund

Mathilda Persson ”Limhamns Bothildan” Fosie

Johanna Andersson ”Garfvaretösen” Lund

Ingerid Jönsson ”Fröken Wrede” Uppmanna

Elna Månsson ”Tuut” ”Hvita Fåret” Wollsjö

Once upon a time there was a street. That's how you can start this post about a street in the old town, which no longer exists. The narrow street was called "Grönnegade" in the middle of the 16th century, probably after the paddocks and gardens that lay along the street. At the end of the 17th century, the buildings on both sides of the street consisted exclusively of small one-story houses with garden plots and had the character of a rural environment, and at this time the street came to be called "Grönegatan". Along the south side of the street were the "Mohrbeck soul sheds", which consisted of nine small houses built by Mayor Mohrbeck as housing for poor people. The houses were a gift from the mayor and were probably built in the 1660s.

Corner house at Kattsundsgatan (right side) and Grönegatan (left side) in the 1960s which over time came to be demolished. On the second floor of the house was a popular restaurant in the 1880s where workers and policemen went to eat. The restaurant was called "Gröna Katten" after the names of the streets. Here you could get a smorgasbord with schnapps for 75 öre, a two-course dinner for 40 öre, fried pike for 30 öre and if you had enough cuddling you could get a brandy for 25 öre.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the rural environment with low-rise buildings began to change character. Then a number of the small houses on the east side of the street were demolished and newly built three- and four-storey houses towered on the plots. At this time, prostitution began to become a problem around this area. At the nearby Humlegatan, several prostitutes had settled and soon Grönegatan was also visited by the light guard. Around 1895, the police received several complaints from the residents about all the nocturnal activity that occurred on this street. Extra interesting how life on Grönegatan could be is the undated letter that one day arrived to the chief of police.

The letter is more or less a letter of complaint from prostituted women ironically complaining and complaining about another prostitute. Copy of the complaint to the Chief of Police.

Another woman who was recorded in the criminal police's documents was Anna Sofia Jönsson who was born in 1856 in Malmö. At the age of seventeen, Anna started working in a factory where she worked for a year and a half. She was seduced when she was eighteen years old and subsequently led a licentious life. Anna was released from the inspection agency in October 1877 when she married and moved later in 1883 to America. One woman who stood out during this study was Johanna Björk. She was the only one of these women who, after marriage, returned to prostitution and was reinstated by the inspection agency. However, later in 1880 she was once again freed. However, the material does not tell us what happened to her afterwards or whether she returned to her marriage.

The majority of women were seduced at the age of seventeen and then eighteen. This indicates that the age the women were at when they were seduced was not far from the time in their lives when the women were confirmed, which was generally between the ages of 14 and 16 in the material. Confirmation was more then than now a kind of rite of passage from childhood to the increasingly adult life that the woman entered with the confirmation. This is something the material was able to show, where we can see that most of the women chose to leave home shortly after they completed the confirmation. Of the number of women who were seduced between the ages of fifteen and eighteen, we get a majority of 54 women who were seduced immediately or some year after their confirmation took place. This is given with an exception in the material where one of the girls was already seduced at the age of thirteen, two years before her confirmation took place. What the study was able to show is that the women were seduced between the ages of thirteen and twenty-three, with the exception of the age of fourteen in which no woman stated that she had been seduced. The age at which most were seduced was the age of seventeen and then the age of eighteen. Only one woman was seduced at the ages of thirteen and twenty-three respectively.

Based on the results of the study, we can see that the majority of the prostitutes who were registered by the criminal police in Malmö had moved from their places of birth to Malmö. The women came from several parts of Sweden but mainly from Svealand and Götaland, with the exception of the women who moved to Malmö from Denmark and Norway and those who were born in Malmö. The majority of women who succeeded in freeing themselves from prostitution did so by contracting marriage. In the results part of the study, a number of women and their fates are highlighted and we can see that they are freed from the institution of the inspection agency through marriage. In some of the cases we can also see that the women either alone or with the respective moved to America.

Source: excerpt from:

Malmö's women of pleasure A study of prostituted women in Malmö 1874–1879
Author: Saga Sandin Bankovic
Examiner: Hans Hägerdal
Supervisor: Roddy Nilsson
Term: HT21
Subject: History
Level: C essay

Source and description appendix
Criminal Police in Malmö (M) DIV:1 (1874-1902)
Table of the places of birth found in the criminal police's register of promiscuous women 1874-1879. The right column shows the number of women born in the locality.

Stockholm source. Prostitution and human trafficking?
https://stockholmskallan.stockholm.se/teman/kriminalitet/prostitution/ (2021-11-21)
The Public Health Authority. Stigma linked to mental illness.
https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/contentassets/6191b7bece1e4e25b69cc291cfedbdf2/sti
gmatization-linked-psychic-ohalsa.pdf (downloaded 2021-11-21)
Malmö city clerk (MSA)
DIV: 1 Lying over lascivious women. (Digitalized copy in Arkiv Digital.)